

4VAC15-110-20

Game: Fox: Part II: Hunting with guns.

Summary:

The proposal is to establish separate hunting seasons for red fox and gray fox, maintaining the current season for red fox and establishing a season for gray fox in 4VAC15-110-25.

Proposed language of amendment:

4VAC15-110-20. Hunting with firearms. Open season for red fox.

Except as otherwise provided ~~by local legislation~~ and with the specific exceptions provided in the sections appearing in this chapter, it shall be lawful to hunt red foxes with firearms from November 1 through the last day in February, both dates inclusive.

Rationale:

Population trend information for gray foxes suggest that populations have been slowly declining for the past 20 years. In areas where populations are currently at low levels, harvest by humans may be suppressing population growth or contributing towards further declines. Since most gray foxes are harvested by hunters (versus trappers), this proposal is intended to provide a meaningful reduction in hunter harvest that may have positive population impacts. Hunter survey information suggests that most hunters who kill a gray fox do so opportunistically while hunting other species. By eliminating hunter harvest of gray foxes during the months of November and December when most hunters are afield (during deer seasons), gray fox populations may benefit.